GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5194
ANSWERED ON:05.04.2017
Mobile Phone Penetration
Rao (Avnthi) Shri Muthamsetti Srinivasa

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the abolition of mobile excise tax in 2008 has increased the mobile penetration by 40 per cent so far and if so, the details thereof, State/UT-wise;

(b) whether the Government would consider this idea to increase mobile penetration in the rural areas and semi-urban areas and if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government in this regard;

(c) whether Government proposes to promote free or low cost internet access to community centres, schools, etc.;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government in this regard along with the time by which the said proposal is likely to be implemented; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE (IC) OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS &
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI MANOJ SINHA)

(a) Yes, Madam. Mobile penetration in India has increased by 340.82 % over the period April 2008 to January 2017. The Service Area wise percentage increase in mobile subscribers in India during April 2008 to January 2017 is annexed.

(b) It is estimated that there are about 55,000 villages in the country that do not have mobile coverage. Various schemes are being implemented with financial support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) for provision of telecom services in commercially unviable rural and remote areas of the country. Mobile coverage to uncovered villages is planned to be provided in a phased manner, subject to availability of financial resources. The Government has emphasized the expansion of mobile coverage in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) areas, North-Eastern Region, Himalayan States and Islands with financial support from Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF).

(c) to (e) There is no specific proposal. However, the Government is implementing the BharatNet programme to create network infrastructure for providing Broadband connectivity to all Gram Panchayats (GPs) (approx. 2,50,000) in the country. The project is being implemented in a phased manner, with the phase-I aiming to cover 1,00,000 GPs. Remaining GPs are targeted to be covered in phase-II, and the work is expected to be completed by December, 2018.

Also, public sector units like BSNL are currently offering internet access to consumers in its service area, at competitive rates. In respect of wired internet access, among other plans, BSNL is offering unlimited internet access @ Rs. 249/per month. BSNL is also offering unlimited internet access over mobile @ Rs. 339/- for 28 days.

Annexure

Service area wise percentage increase in mobile telephone connections
from 01.04.2008 to 31.01.2017
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Sr.No. Service area Total mobile telephone connections (in million) % increase in mobile telephone connections
01.04.2008 31.01.2017
1 Andhra Pradesh 20.58 83.39 305.25
2 Assam 3.91 21.28 443.84
3 Bihar 11.51 83.09 621.88
4 Gujarat 16.97 70.14 313.36
5 Haryana 6.40 24.46 282.14
6 Himachal Pradesh 2.30 10.10 339.32
7 Jammu & Kashmir 2.20 11.49 421.80
8 Karnataka 17.04 68.57 302.29
9 Kerala 11.70 38.40 228.23
10 Madhya Pradesh 13.19 68.38 418.35

11 Maharashtra 21.08 92.86 340.53
12 North East 2.12 12.61 495.43
13 Odisha 5.18 33.58 548.33
14 Punjab 11.72 37.16 217.21
15 Rajasthan 13.59 65.88 384.89
16 Tamil Nadu 25.35 87.82 246.51
17 Uttar Pradesh 29.05 168.01 478.30
18 West Bengal 9.44 56.75 501.22
19 Kolkata 7.84 28.78 266.95
20 Delhi 16.28 52.19 220.50
21 Mumbai 13.63 35.94 163.67
Total 261.08 1150.89 340.82
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